

keeping with Soviet portrayal of the unwashed masses before their "liberation" to the extent that it depicts animal passions, the crude and miserable way of life and religious devotion (based more on pagan rituals than on Christian teachings) of these people. There are some very striking aspects; e.g., when the barren wife disrobes and, completely naked, walks through the fields to make a fertility offering, she is seen by a village witch doctor who tries to rape her, and in the scene after the wedding the husband disrobes his bride, examines her and then the scene discreetly fades out; religious symbolism is carried very far; the story is told in an abstract way. There is little dialogue and only brief descriptive titles.

If you are interested in seeing either this or the film described in the attached, please let me know and I will have it set up for you (and anyone else who might be interested). ☐ have seen the film Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors.

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Remarks: FYI: In addition to the film described in the attached, CIA has another film which you might enjoy seeing. It, too, was obtained through an AECASSOWARY source and a copy made by CIA for retention in the film library. The film was produced to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Ukrainian writer Mikhail Kotsyubinsky. The name of it is <u>Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors</u> , and it is based on the writer's novel of the same name. It is a remarkable film, which the Soviets decided was too progressive for showing domestically. It was entered in film festivals abroad and won at least one award, in a So. American festival. The film is in color. It uses some very interesting techniques and extreme symbolism. It is a portrayal of the hard life of the Hutsul's of the Carpathian Mts. in the 19th Century. The film is in			
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S E C R E T

21 January 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: C/SB/POS
THROUGH : CSB/PO/M
SUBJECT : Soviet Film, SON (A Dream)

1. There is now available in the OCR Film Branch library a copy of a Soviet Ukrainian-language film entitled SON (A Dream). The film was obtained by AECASSOWARY/2 through a collaborator in Australia, who obtained it from a Soviet source. From the technical standpoint the film is rather poor. Unfortunately, the sound is not too good and it is difficult to get all the dialogue. It is a good example, however, of how sensitive the authorities are about anything which might remind Soviet citizens that things haven't changed much in the past century insomuch as freedom of expression is concerned.

2. SON was directed by V. Denisenko and produced by the Dovzhenko Film Studio in Kiev. The screen play, by Dmytro PAVLYCHKO, is based on SON, a satiric fantasy by the 18th Century poet Taras Shevchenko, which he wrote in St. Petersburg in 1844. Shevchenko sees himself in a dream going to St. Petersburg. There is a savage scene with Czar Peter I and Catherine II and their entourage. The Czar slaps the face of one of his highest advisors, who follows suit by kicking his subordinate, who in turn slaps one of the lower rank. In the subsequent melee, all in the entourage have been slapped by a superior, yet all exclaim "Hurrah" for the Czar and Czarina. In a following scene, the monument of Peter I is shown, with an inscription by Catherine II, "To the first from the second." Shevchenko comments that the first crucified the Ukraine, and the second finished off the poor orphan. When in 1847 Shevchenko was arrested and sentenced to 10 years of hard labor, SON prominently figured as an exhibit of his slanderous writings directed against the Czar and his family and against the political and social structure of the Russian Empire.

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3. Pavlychko's script includes the main events of Shevchenko's SON. Shevchenko is presented as a young, strong-willed and talented intellectual, vehemently opposing the then existing political and social order. Throughout the play Shevchenko displays an ardent love for the Ukrainian people and disdain toward the Czarist regime and its supporters. Portions of this film dealing with 18th Century events remind Soviet Ukrainians of the present plight of their country, as for example, the scene in which an incensed Czar adds to Shevchenko's sentence a stipulation that he be permitted no pen or paper during his imprisonment.

4. SON was released for showing to Soviet audiences in the early summer of 1965. It was recalled from the film theaters shortly thereafter, again released for a short while and again recalled. There are no indications that the film is being shown currently. It is believed the analogy with present conditions in the Ukraine is so striking that it would serve no good purpose to show it to Soviet citizens.

[SB/PO/M]

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